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ABSTRACT

In 1991, the Kansas Association of School Boards began a program called Quest for Quality. The program is based on the belief that public schools must adjust to changes in children, families, communities, and economic and political conditions in the nation and the world. Quest for Quality also reaffirms the American school system's responsiveness to community needs and values through the locally elected school board. This guide is designed to help school board members understand the history of school reform nationally and in Kansas, and to respond to those reforms. Several national educational reform efforts outlined include the National Education Goals, the "America's Choice" report, the SCANS report, National Education Goals Report, America 2000, New American Schools, and "Redefining the Possible: Achieving the National Goals." Kansas reform efforts include state strategic directions, Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA), the School District Finance Act, initiatives on behalf of children by the Kansas State Legislature, and the Kansas Commission on Education Restructuring and Accountability. In addition, the QPA plan is outlined to help school boards meet the plan's requirements. These requirements include data collection, school profiles, improvement plans, and the 10 goals, or outcomes, all schools must work toward. A glossary and questions and answers about QPA are included. (JPT)

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Kansas School Reform: A Quest for Quality

A Guide for Board Members

Kansas Association of School Boards
1992

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School Reform: A Quest for Quality

In 1991, the Kansas Association of School Boards launched an initiative called Quest for Quality. The Quest for Quality program was developed with the belief that the public school system must change to address the new realities of children, families and communities, and the economic and political changes in the nation and the world. At the same time, it reaffirms the belief that the enduring strength of the American public school system is its responsiveness to community needs and values through the locally-elected school board.

Quest for Quality proposed a series of changes in state policies for schools and school finance. Many of these changes were enacted by the 1992 Legislature, primarily through the School District Finance and Quality Performance Act. Quest for Quality also endorsed the State Board of Education's Quality Performance Accreditation plan, a system designed to base school accreditation on performance or "outcomes."

This booklet is designed to help school board members understand the recent history of school reform efforts nationally and in Kansas, and to respond to those efforts. Because QPA has been adopted by both the State Board of Education and the State Legislature, recommendations for board actions are presented within the framework of the QPA outcomes.

Also included are recommendations for additional school improvement strategies at the state level, a vision statement for local school boards adopted by the National School Boards Association and the KASB Board of Directors, and a list of KASB services designed to help local boards fulfill their mission.

National Initiatives

Faced with rising international competition, national leaders have focused on education. The emphasis is on high, measurable standards of school and student performance.

National Education Goals

A new national education initiative was begun in February, 1989, when President Bush and the nation's Governors met for an "education summit" in Charlottesville, Virginia. They established six National Education Goals, to be achieved by the year 2000.

National Education Goals

Goal 1
All children in America will start school ready to learn.

Goal 2
The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

Goal 3
American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

Goal 4
U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

Goal 5
Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Goal 6
Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

The *America's Choice* Report

In June, 1990, the National Center on Education and the Economy issued the report: *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*. NCEE, a national not-for-profit organization, was created to "develop proposals for building the world class education and training system that the U.S. must have if it is to have a world class economy."

The *America's Choice* report called for development of national educational performance standards, benchmarked to the highest in the world, to be met by students by age 16. Alternative learning systems should be developed for students who cannot meet those standards in regular schools. It also called for a new system of technical and professional certificates and associate's degrees, incentives for employers to support further education and training for their workers, and a system of employment and training boards to oversee school-to-work transition programs.

NCEE has also joined with the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburg to create the New Standards Project, involving seventeen states and six city school districts. The New Standards Project is developing a national system of examinations, rather than a single national test, to measure student performance in academic subjects.

The *SCANS* Report

In July, 1990, the U.S. Secretary of Labor and the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills issued the SCANS Report: *What Work Requires of Schools*. The report identified five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that are needed for the workplace. The competencies are the abilities to productively use resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems and technology.

The foundation of competency requires basic skills (reading, writing, mathematics, speaking and listening), thinking skills (creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, visualizing, knowing how to learn, and reasoning) and personal qualities (responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity).

National Education Goals Report

Also in July, 1990, the National Education Goals Panel was established. The panel is composed of eight Governors, two members of the President's Administration and four members of Congress. It is charged with assessing progress toward achieving the national goals every year until the year 2000.

The first national education goals report was issued in September, 1991. The annual report shows both national and state-by-state progress on the national goals, using a variety of measurements. The panel has initiated various subgroups to work on refining measurements of education progress.

America 2000

On April 18, 1991, President Bush announced America 2000: An Education Strategy. America 2000 proposed four "tracks" to address the six National Education Goals. They are:

Better and More Accountable Schools. Proposes a 15-point accountability package. Major elements include the development of "World Class Standards" in core subjects; voluntary national achievement tests tied to those standards; local, state and national "report cards"; and increased school choice.

A New Generation of American Schools. Encourages the development of "New American Schools" that "break the mold" of traditional school operation and management. These schools should be the model changes in the system of education as the nation enters the 21st century.

A Nation of Students. Calls for the development of Private-Sector Skills Standards, leading to "skill certificates," establishing one-stop assessment and referral Skill Clinics for workers, and a recommitment to adult literacy efforts.

Communities Where Learning Can Happen. Challenges states and communities to undertake four tasks: 1) Adopt the six National Education Goals. 2) Develop a community-wide strategy to achieve them. 3) Design a report card to measure results. 4) Plan for and support a New American School.

New American Schools

In July, 1992, the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) announced the selection of eleven Design Teams that will develop, test and disseminate information on prototypes of New American Schools. The Design Teams must meet three challenges: 1) help all students meet new national standards in the five core subjects and prepare students for responsible citizenship, further learning and productive employment; 2) operate on a budget comparable to conventional schools; and 3) seek fundamental changes in American schooling. NASDC is a private, non-profit organization formed by American business leaders in response to the America 2000 strategies, funded by private contributions.

Redefining the Possible

In August, 1992, the National Governors' Association released the final reports of the NGA Chairman's Initiative called *Redefining the Possible: Achieving the National Goals*. Developed by three action teams, these reports are:

Every Child Ready for School, concerning Goal 1, which provides benchmarks for tracking state progress on school readiness initiatives.

Keys to Changing the System, concerning Goals 2, 3, 4 and 6, which identifies common lessons learned by various states in implementing school restructuring.

Enhancing Skills for a Competitive World, concerning Goal 5, focuses on developing state initiatives to improve education and training programs to keep the U.S. competitive in the world marketplace.

For more information on these reports and programs, contact the KASB Governmental Relations Department.

Kansas Initiatives

The State Board of Education and Legislature are developing new expectations of schools. The state will measure schools' progress in meeting state standards and outcomes. Schools must also work more closely with parents and communities, and play a broader role in providing social services.

State Strategic Directions

In June, 1989, the Kansas State Board of Education approved the following mission for Kansas Education:

To prepare each person with the living, learning and working skills and values necessary for caring, productive and fulfilling participation in our evolving, global society.

In support of this mission, the State Board has adopted strategic directions for the restructuring of Kansas education. Over the last three years, the State Board has initiated a variety of programs to address these strategic directions - often with the encouragement of state legislators.

Outcomes Based Education-QPA

The most significant program may be the Quality Performance Accreditation system. QPA was adopted by the State Board in March, 1991, after a year of study by a special task force on outcomes based education. The QPA system includes ten "outcomes" that the state expects of all schools.

Under the QPA system, each school must demonstrate through state and local indicators that it is meeting these outcomes in order to receive accreditation from the State Board. Accreditation will be on four-year cycles. School districts and buildings are being phased into the system over a four-year period, beginning with 50 districts in the 1991-92 school year.

The State Board adopted a number of revisions to the original QPA plan in August, 1992. Some of these revisions respond to legislative initiatives passed by the 1992 Legislature.

Strategic Directions for Restructuring Schools

1. Create Learning Communities

"High individual and educational achievements are not possible without a positive, strong collaboration among schools, parents, and community. A learning-working community involves all age groups of citizens and community sectors in individual, organization, and community development."

2. Develop and Extend Resources for Parenting Programs and Early Childhood Education

"The fragmentation of communities and families makes it more difficult to provide foundations for learning. Today there is a strong need to develop and extend parenting and early childhood programs which are essential for attaining later levels of excellence."

3. Expand Learner-Outcome Curriculum and Learner-Focused Instruction

"The primary outcomes of the educational process must be to develop the information processing, thinking and work place skills needed for learning, living, and working. Curriculum should be outcome-based and instruction should be varied to meet the variety of student learning styles."

4. Provide Inclusive Learning Environments

"Schools must demonstrate a genuine responsiveness to the needs of all students and community cultures and encourage and expect all learners to achieve high levels of learning."

5. Strengthen Involvement of Business and Industry in Education

"When schools can involve business and industry in developing understandings of common interests and involving them in tangible actions to support schools, we strengthen the learning community."

6. Provide Quality Staff and Organizational Development

"Restructuring schools requires new paradigms, new models and approaches, new ways of thinking, and new behavior. This can only be achieved by the provision of systematic, quality staff and organizational programs."

From *Kansas Education For The 21st Century*,
Kansas State Board of Education,
April 1992

School District Finance Act

The School District Finance and Quality Performance Act of 1992 contained the most significant overhaul of school financing in Kansas since the School District Equalization Act was passed in 1973. In addition to restructuring the school finance system, the act also contains several important "school reform" provisions.

First, the act mandates the development of the Quality Performance Accreditation system, and requires all school districts to be participating in the system by 1994-95, and all school buildings by 1995-96. After that point, districts must be evaluating and reporting progress toward achieving the state outcomes to be eligible for state funding.

Second, the act requires the State Board to develop outcomes, standards, and means of assessment for a minimum of three benchmark levels in grades K-12 in mathematics, science, communications and social studies by July, 1993, which must be reviewed in at least three-year intervals. These standards must be equal to or higher than other states and nations.

Third, the act requires that every school building (in school districts that operate more than one building) establish an advisory site council made up of the principal, teachers and staff, parents, business representatives and other members of the community.

Fourth, the act increases the minimum length of the school year by six days or 36 hours over a three-year period, beginning in 1992-93.

A Blueprint for Children

During the 1991 Legislative Interim, a Special Committee on Children's Initiatives was established to study the condition of Kansas children and recommend state policies for improvement. The Committee's report, *A Blueprint for Investing in the Future of Kansas Children and Families*, established as a "Target for Change" the restructuring of schools to respond to changing education and developmental needs of children. The restructuring should include the recognition that "Schools are no longer purely academic institutions. In addition to the academic mission, they have taken on a broader social mission which must be acknowledged."

The "blueprint" led to the introduction of at least 25 bills in the 1992 Legislature. Several that passed into law directly affect schools. One requires schools to offer breakfast programs by the 1993-94 school year, unless a waiver is granted by the State Board. A second requires schools to verify that first-time students have received a physical health examination. A third makes it easier for schools to be licensed as facilities for child care programs.

Commission on Restructuring

Another recommendation from the "blueprint" led to the creation of the Kansas Commission on Education Restructuring and Accountability. This commission is charged with developing goals and strategies for the reform and restructuring of public elementary and secondary education in Kansas. The Commission, composed of educators, legislators and business and community leaders, began its work in July, 1992, and is expected to submit a report and recommendations by December, 1992 to the Governor and State Legislature.

Other New Programs

Kansas has enacted at least three other programs to address school improvement. Each provides state funding matched by local school district support. The Parent Education Program is designed to assist new parents in their role as the child's first and most important teacher. The program is to be made available to all districts in 1993-94. The Kansas Inservice Education Program requires districts to develop plans for teacher training and retraining with the approval of the State Board. It was made mandatory for districts by the 1992 Legislature. The Educational Excellence Grant Program funds innovative programs developed by local districts through a competitive grant program.

For more information, contact the KASB Governmental Relations or Education Services Departments.

School Improvement Through QPA

Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA) has been adopted by the State Board of Education and mandated by the Legislature through the new School District Finance and Quality Performance Act. All districts are expected to be participating in QPA by 1994-95.

QPA requires districts to develop for each school a written plan for meeting state outcomes, and to measure and report on the progress of each plan. There are ten state outcomes, each with standards and indicators of progress. Districts may adopt additional outcomes, standards and indicators to be used locally. Each plan should be developed with input from the staff and community.

This section outlines the steps each board must take to begin organized school improvement under the QPA framework.

Assigning Responsibility

Even if the district has not yet entered the four-year cycle established by the State Board, local boards should adopt policies which mandate school improvement and continuous study of the district's curriculum, assessment (testing) programs, and students' overall rate of basic skill mastery. A staff member should be assigned to manage school improvement efforts and school improvement teams should be selected in each building.

Once a QPA manager has been selected and improvement teams are in place in each building, they can begin to gather information necessary to develop a picture of the district. This will allow the board to debate the implications of where the district is and to set some directions for its future.

Data Collection

Most of this information is already being collected by the district in some form. It includes: student achievement levels in mathematics, reading and composition; graduation and dropout rates; retention and promotion rates for grades K-8; class failure rates for grades 9-12; absence statistics for teachers and students; student disciplinary statistics, particularly suspension and expulsion figures; surveys of students after they leave high school; and reports on what happens to the young men and women who enter the workforce.

This information should be collected and charted so that it reflects what has happened in the past 3-5 years. The board should look for trends (positive or negative) over time. The information must be disaggregated (broken down) by sex, ethnic group and economic status, and other factors important to the district so different groups of students can be analyzed. Using data in this way helps the board monitor the performance of all groups of students.

School Profiles

All this information is called a school profile, and the board will receive one for each building as it begins school improvement efforts. This process will take time - 12 to 18 months in most cases - so be patient and ask for progress reports from staff as the profiles are being assembled. Once school profiles are ready, the board can begin its efforts to set the priorities which will direct the staff's school improvement efforts.

Improvement Plans

Reports and profiles are based on information which can be verified and defended. Information allows the staff to make recommendations to the board which outline the next steps necessary for improving the schools. As with any staff recommendation, the board must study and discuss the proposed school improvement plans and other reports which come before them. If the plans cannot be justified with school profile information, or do not seem to address the most pressing problems facing the school, the board should ask staff to study the issues further and return with better plans. By following the steps outlined in this document the board will begin the serious efforts necessary to generate improvement in the ten state outcomes.

Achieving the Outcomes

On the following pages, the ten QPA outcomes are printed, with the state standards and performance indicators on the left. On the right, KASB presents a "translation" of what the outcome means for school board members, followed by recommended steps the board should take to begin work on the outcome. Also listed are examples of what the board can use to measure progress on achieving the outcome.

Outcome 1

Teachers, principals, board members and all other educational staff establish high expectations for student learning and provide continuous monitoring of student achievement.

STANDARD 1: Teachers and principals demonstrate that all students have a high level of mastery of basic skills.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Teachers will use multiple assessment techniques to demonstrate student mastery of basic skills.
2. Principals will report at least annually to local Boards of Education student performance related to mastery of basic skills.
3. Teachers will develop, maintain and assess for progress a student improvement plan for all students who are deficient in mastery of basic skills.
4. Teachers will use technology to monitor student learning.

STANDARD 2: Teachers, principals, board members and all other educational staff will demonstrate that all students have acquired a broad range of knowledge and skills which will enable them to live, learn and work in a global society.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Teachers, principals and board members will increase or maintain a high student graduation rate.
2. Teachers, principals and board members will decrease or maintain a low student dropout rate.
3. Teachers and principals will demonstrate that course completion patterns reflect that all students have equal access to advanced math and science courses.
4. Teachers and principals will increase or maintain a high percentage of students demonstrating proficiency in advanced mathematics and science.
5. Teachers and principals will increase or maintain a high percentage of students successfully demonstrating mastery of algebraic concepts and skills on local curriculum measures.
6. Teachers and principals will provide students with the technological resources necessary to self-monitor achievement.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

The board must adopt a definition of high expectations for student learning. All students will be expected to master basic skills as they progress through the grades, and to use these basic skills to move towards higher levels of thinking and performance as they mature. The board must insist that they receive regular reports in plain language which show where this effort is succeeding, and where additional work needs to be done.

First Steps:

The board approves a statement of the basic skills to be mastered by all students in the district at various grade levels and when they graduate. These skills should be developed and justified by the professional staff prior to board action.

The board reviews the district's assessment program. It should include multiple assessment (testing) techniques to measure student performance at all levels, and show how the results of assessments are used to change teacher behavior and to improve instruction. If the assessment program is inadequate, the board directs the staff to improve the program, with a deadline for reporting progress.

The board adopts a procedure for receiving summary reports at least annually on the mastery of basic skills by students, with recommendations for improving student performance.

The board adopts a policy requiring that improvement plans for individual students deficient in basic skills be developed, implemented and the results assessed by the appropriate staff members.

The board reviews the use of technology in monitoring student learning and assisting students in self-monitoring achievement.

Reports to measure progress:

- Graduation Rates.
- Drop-out rates.
- Enrollment in, and mastery of, advanced math and science courses.
- Number of students on improvement plans, and progress of those students.

Outcome 2

Schools have a basic mission which prepares the learners to live, learn, and work in a global society.

STANDARD 1: Schools have a clearly defined mission that reflects beliefs and practices about learning for all students.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Schools will demonstrate that the community, site based councils and staff are involved in establishing and implementing their mission.
2. Schools will provide evidence that decisions are driven by the mission.
3. Schools will develop and implement an effective school improvement plan.
4. Schools will provide evidence that parents support the school mission and are involved in an authentic partnership with the school.
5. Teachers and principals will conduct a one and six year follow-up of all graduating students to assess how effective the school was in meeting its mission and progress toward or maintain a high percentage of student satisfaction with student education.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

The board must guarantee that each school in the district has an appropriate mission, that this mission is being seriously pursued by all staff (classified and certified), that the community is involved in the mission's development, and that there is a clear vision of what students need to know and be able to do to survive in the workplace of the future.

First Steps:

The board reviews the mission statement of the district and each building to determine its appropriateness and timeliness. Building missions are evaluated to make sure they support the district mission.

The board adopts a policy requiring that a site council which meets statutory guidelines is active in each building, and is involved in the review of the mission statement, published learning objectives and school improvement efforts to improve student performance.

The board reviews and approves each building's school improvement plan.

Reports to measure progress:

- One and six year follow-up survey of graduating students to assess effectiveness of the school mission and satisfaction of students.
- Regular reports from site councils on how each building is meeting its mission, and other reports as determined by the board.

Outcome 3

Teachers, principals, board members, and other educational staff demonstrate that students are actively engaged in learning within an orderly and safe environment.

STANDARD 1: All students are engaged in meaningful, planned learning activities during the allocated school time.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Teachers and principals will increase or maintain a high student attendance rate.
2. Teachers and principals will demonstrate that they provide students with a climate conducive to collaborative and cooperative learning.
3. Teachers and principals will demonstrate a decrease in or maintain a low number of out of school suspensions and expulsions.

STANDARD 2: Teachers, principals and students recognize and respect the value of multicultural education.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Teachers, principals, and students will demonstrate an understanding and respect for their own culture as well as for the cultural diversity of this country.
2. Teachers and principals will demonstrate a decrease or maintain a low number of incidences of crime and violent acts committed against students and teachers.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

The board receives information from the staff which shows that schools are safe and orderly, and that students are taught through a variety of instructional methods that actively involve them in their own learning.

First steps:

The board reviews information describing: attendance patterns; discipline referrals—and what happens to students with problems; student, teacher and parent attitudes about school; and school safety issues, such as violence and gang activity.

The board requires reports on the percentage of time actually used for instruction in each school. Staff should be asked if this amount of time is adequate to meet instructional objectives. If necessary, plans should be made to increase instructional time.

Reports to measure progress:

- Comparisons of student attendance rates for the past five years.
- Suspension and expulsion rates for each building, broken down by age, sex, race, grade point average, and other pertinent information.
- Information about the increase or decrease in violent acts, racial incidents, complaints from students and parents about the treatment of individual students or groups of students.

Outcome 4

Schools have an instructional leadership which results in improved student performance.

STANDARD 1: Schools demonstrate that they have a site based decision making team of effective instructional leaders.

STATE INDICATORS:

1. Schools will demonstrate the effectiveness of the instructional leaders through the implementation of an effective school improvement plan.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

The superintendent, principals and other administrators are held accountable for improving the academic performance of all groups of students over time. Supervision and evaluation is a major part of each administrator's day. As improvement plans are brought to the board and modified to meet each school's changing needs, the board receives evidence of how instructional leadership is helping students.

First step:

The board receives reports from staff on the effective school improvement efforts that are being pursued in each school.

Reports to measure progress:

- Written records of meetings of each building's school improvement team.
- Evaluation summaries of professional staff. For example, how many teachers receive each rating on the district's performance scale.
- Summaries of the improvement plans written for staff members and progress towards specific improvements.
- Summaries of individual and group inservice activities intended to retrain staff and to help them learn new skills which will support school improvement.

Outcome 5

Students communicate effectively to live, learn, and work in a global society.

STANDARD 1: Students analyze, summarize and comprehend what is read in all subject areas.
STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., the reading portion of the state communications assessment, the communications items on the state mathematics assessment.
2. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the social studies and science state assessments*.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 2: Students demonstrate in their written composition and oral communication clear articulation, analysis, conceptualization, synthesis, and distillation of information.
STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., the writing portion and oral portion of the state communications assessment, the open-ended, written items on the state mathematics assessment.
2. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the social studies and science state assessments*.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 3: Students demonstrate their adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, negotiation, and oral communication skills necessary to work collaboratively in teams.
STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., the listening and oral communication portions of the state communications assessment.
2. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the social studies and science state assessments*.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.
*To be developed during 1992-93 and assessed in the Spring of 1994.

Translation:

The board uses information from the state communications test and other district testing programs to see that students are learning how to speak, read and write effectively. The board should also ask administrators and teachers how changes in the educational programs will meet this outcome. Anonymous samples of student work could also be presented to the board on occasion, as well as oral presentations from students to demonstrate their communication skills. Boards must also look for new forms of assessment being developed in their district - for example, anonymous collections of student work (portfolios) and performance assessments.

First step:

The professional staff demonstrates to the board that local curriculum meets statewide standards in written composition and oral communication. These standards include: the ability to speak clearly, to analyze information, to explain new ideas, to put together ideas learned from the lessons, and to clarify large amounts of information in summary form.

Reports to measure progress:

- Evidence of increasing achievement by all student groups on the district's multiple assessments measuring student achievement in the ability to analyze, summarize and comprehend what is read in all subjects.
- Evidence of increasing achievement by all student groups in both oral and written communication, and, beginning in the Spring of 1994, on state assessments in social studies and science.

Outcome 6

Students think creatively and solve problems necessary to live, learn and work in a global society.

STANDARD 1: All students successfully apply problem-solving skills.
STATE INDICATORS
1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., problem-solving scores on the state mathematics assessment.
2. The number of students completing with passing grade courses in advanced math and science as well as other advanced courses offered will increase across all student groups.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 2: All students demonstrate the ability to find information; to process, analyze, and synthesize it; and to apply it to new situations.
STATE INDICATORS
1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the state communications and mathematics assessments.
2. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the state social studies and science assessments*.
3. The number of students successfully demonstrating mastery of algebraic concepts and skills on local curriculum measures will increase across all student groups.
4. The number of students completing advanced math and science courses with passing grades will increase across all student groups.
5. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 3: All students use creative, imaginative and divergent thinking to formulate and solve problems and to communicate their results.
STATE INDICATORS
1. Student performance will be evaluated using multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.
2. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., problem-solving scores on the state mathematics assessment.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

*To be developed during 1992-93 and assessed in the Spring of 1994.

Translation:
Boards should ask for evidence that students are learning how to think creatively and to solve problems as a regular part of the instructional program. The state math, science and social studies tests, as well as local assessments, should be used to measure this outcome.

First step:
The professional staff demonstrates to the board that the district has developed local curriculum that meets statewide standards in mathematics and science and in creative thinking and problem solving.

Reports to measure progress:
- Increased achievement by all student groups on multiple assessments of problem-solving and application skills in mathematics and science.
- Disaggregated evidence of an increased enrollment and successful completion of algebra by all student groups and of their continued enrollment and successful completion of at least one higher mathematics class. (The goal should be to get all students through at least algebra I before they graduate.)
- Achievement on state assessments (math, reading and communications now; social studies and science in the Spring of 1994).

NOTE: The skills listed below will be difficult to measure, so be patient. District staff and outside agencies will have to work together to find ways to do this. Getting evidence that students can actually demonstrate these skills in "real world" situations is one approach.
- Multiple assessments of students' ability to find information; to process, analyze and arrange it in new ways; and to apply it to new situations.
- Multiple assessments of students' ability to be creative, imaginative and to use a variety of methods to solve problems and to communicate their results.

Outcome 7

Students work effectively both independently and in groups to live, learn, and work in a global society.

STANDARD 1: All students demonstrate the ability to think and work together in the common cause of a mission.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., interpersonal skills achievement on the interpersonal communication skills portion of the state communications assessment.
2. Student self concept, adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, and negotiation skills necessary for teamwork will improve across all student groups.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 2: All students demonstrate techniques for separating people from problems, focusing on interests not positions, inventing options for mutual gain, and using objective criteria.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., interpersonal skills achievement on the interpersonal communication skills portion of the state communications assessment.
2. Student self concept, adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, and negotiation skills necessary for teamwork will improve across all student groups.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

STANDARD 3: All students are tolerant of individual differences and work together without prejudice, bias, or discrimination.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Achievement will increase across all student groups on the appropriate components of the state assessments; e.g., interpersonal skills achievement on the interpersonal communication skills portion of the state communications assessment.
2. Student self concept, adaptability/flexibility, interpersonal, and negotiation skills necessary for teamwork will improve across all student groups.
3. Achievement will increase across all student groups as demonstrated through the use of multiple assessment techniques aligned with local curriculum.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

Boards should ask for evidence that students are learning how to work together to solve problems as a regular part of the instructional program. Sample lessons, anonymous examples of student activities and products of student work at various grade levels could be presented to the board.

First step:

The professional staff demonstrates to the board that the district has developed local curriculum strategies to encourage students to work effectively, independently and in groups.

Reports to measure progress:

- Assessments of students' ability to successfully work together in the common cause of a mission, and demonstration of techniques for separating people from problems, focusing on interests not positions, inventing options for mutual gain, and using objective criteria.
- Survey information which shows that all students are becoming tolerant of individual differences and work together without prejudice, bias, or discrimination.
- Assessments that all students are encouraged by staff to be flexible, adaptable and to work in groups without prejudice, bias, or discrimination being directed at others; for example, through reports on staff observation and anonymous student essays.

Outcome 8

Students have the physical and emotional well-being necessary to live, learn, and work in a global society.

STANDARD: All students have the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential to live a healthy and productive life.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Schools will demonstrate that they have implemented the State Board of Education's Human Sexuality and AIDS guidelines.
2. Students will participate in individual and team physical activities which prepare them for healthy life-long living.
3. Students will demonstrate an increased commitment to family, school, and community which will be reflected through a delayed or eliminated use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.
4. Schools will demonstrate a decrease in student at-risk behavior; e.g., teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

Boards should evaluate and analyze the human sexuality programs, drug and alcohol prevention and awareness programs, and the physical education programs offered to the students to see if they are helping to meet this outcome. Boards should try to involve parents/grandparents, counselors (both elementary and secondary) and community health and social agencies with this outcome.

First step:

The professional staff demonstrates to the board that local curriculum supports healthy lifestyles and encourages students to avoid at-risk behaviors, such as sexual activity, unprotected sex if not abstinent and the use of alcohol and other drugs. This review should include the State Board of Education's Human Sexuality/AIDS guidelines; physical education courses should emphasize life-long activities instead of relying exclusively on competitive team sports.

Reports to measure progress:

- Opt-out rates in the Human Sexuality and AIDS programs.
- Survey information gathered annually and developed in a comparative format which shows long-term increases or decreases in student use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- Information from health departments, hospitals and state agencies about the rates of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases in the community is kept up-to-date and used to help evaluate the success of the human sexuality and AIDS program.
- Information reported on meeting the requirements of the federal Drug Free Schools and Communities Act.

Outcome 9

Staff development results in increased staff knowledge and new or enhanced instructional skills that result in increased student success.

STANDARD 1: All staff are engaged in continuous professional development leading to enhancement of skills, techniques, and subject knowledge, improvement in job effectiveness, and competent on-the-job performance.

STATE INDICATOR

1. The local district inservice plan will include structures for individually determined professional development and will reward only those activities providing evidence of increased staff knowledge, skill development leading to on-the-job behavior change as required in the new work force skills, The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), and/or increased student success.

STANDARD 2: All staff demonstrate increased knowledge and new or enhanced instructional skills based on the identified staff development priorities in the school improvement plan.

STATE INDICATORS

1. The staff development program will contain components of: a) knowledge and theory; b) demonstration of concepts or skills; c) adequate practice opportunity; d) feedback to staff on their performance with the new concepts; and e) maintenance of skills over time through study groups, follow-up training, etc.
2. Schools will demonstrate a commitment to staff development by providing staff with the appropriate resources to keep abreast of the current research.

STANDARD 3: Organizational development needs of the school building and district are met through effective outcomes-based staff development programs.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Schools will provide evidence of increased organizational effectiveness as demonstrated through successful district and/or building leadership teams; curriculum committees; and collaborative linkages with institutions of higher education, business, and the community.
2. All staff will demonstrate the requisite knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, and skills necessary for the orientation to and development of Quality Performance Accreditation.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

The board should receive regular reports about how staff development for teachers and administrators is changing behavior and instruction, and how it is improving student learning. The supervision and evaluation process and the staff development inservice program should help teachers and administrators assume new roles as schools are changed to meet the needs of all student groups.

First step:

The superintendent proposes, and the board adopts long-term staff development plans which emphasize changing behavior and practice in the classroom that are intended to increase student achievement and to implement district and building missions.

Reports to measure progress:

- Periodic evaluations that all staff are demonstrating an increased knowledge of new or enhanced instructional skills based on the staff development priorities identified in the school improvement plan.

Outcome 10

The school and community collaborate to create a learning community.

STANDARD 1: Learning communities deliver high quality human resource development for all groups of citizens from birth to death.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Schools will demonstrate that programs of education for youth, parents, and older citizens are being developed, implemented or maintained by the community and school.
2. Schools will provide evidence that the community supports early childhood education in an effort to increase school readiness for young children.
3. Schools will demonstrate strong programs in workplace competencies for progressive skills development for youth and adults in partnership with business and industry.

STANDARD 2: The school is one of many resources that belongs to the community and supports children, families and the community.

STATE INDICATORS

1. Schools will provide evidence that they are recognized as one of the community centers where resources for education, health, societal, emotional, and intellectual development for the family is provided.
2. Schools will provide evidence of family involvement programs for parents, other adults, and older citizens.
3. Schools will provide evidence that they are recognized as community human resource centers where support is provided for social problems such as drug and alcohol addiction, child abuse prevention, and the promotion of positive approaches to cultural diversity.
4. Schools will demonstrate that the site based councils are involved in the decision making process and provide leadership for the school improvement plan.

LOCAL INDICATORS will be developed and used.

Translation:

Schools must work with parents and the community to make sure that students are both ready to learn (pre-school and related programs) and continue to learn after graduation. School improvement should involve individuals and groups who have not traditionally been part of the process. Examples are: people who do not have children in school, local business and civic groups, law enforcement, business partners with the district or an individual school, grandparents or other senior citizens, area colleges, vocational schools and adult education programs, inviting adults to attend high school classes on a space-available basis, and community service programs for school students.

First steps:

The board establishes expectations that district schools will move towards becoming a learning community which serves people of all ages in a variety of ways.

The board works with school site councils to involve the community in the educational program. Examples of efforts that could be initiated include:

- Working with civic and service groups on joint projects to encourage community service by students, and encouraging extensions of the education program which allow students to practice group work and problem-solving skills.
- Working with day care centers and other child care providers to encourage programs which promote school readiness and parent education.
- Programs involving senior citizen groups, such as student visits to nursing homes, adopt-a-senior programs, senior citizens tutoring in schools, presentations to seniors groups to explain school programs.
- Cooperative inoculation and general health and nutrition programs with local, county and state health and social services agencies.
- Working with law enforcement agencies to address truancy and juvenile crime issues.

1993 State Policy Recommendations

KASB's Quest for Quality program includes a number of state policy recommendations. Since 1992, many of these proposals have been adopted by the State Legislature and the State Board of Education. For school improvement to continue in Kansas, further state policy action will be needed. KASB offers the following recommendations:

School Accountability

- The state should support the continued development and implementation of Quality Performance Accreditation, including adequate funding for State Board of Education oversight and assistance.
- School districts must be able to develop their own strategies for achieving state outcomes.
- Appropriate sanctions should be established at all levels for failure to meet state accreditation standards.
- Adequate funding should be provided to implement state assessments and student improvement programs for core academic skills.

Instructional Effectiveness

- The state inservice program should be fully funded.
- Standards for teachers to achieve current due process or tenure rights should be changed to consider professional development and performance. Currently, boards must either grant teachers tenure after three years or dismiss them.
- Financial incentives should be established for professional educators based on instructional performance.

School Readiness and Family Support

- Funding for developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs should be provided through the state school finance system.
- The Parent Education Program should be fully funded.

School Restructuring

- The Educational Excellence Grant Program should be expanded, and rewards and recognition should be provided for exemplary school improvement.
- The state should provide adequate support to assist and evaluate the mandatory school site councils.

School Finance

- The state should provide an adequate base budget per pupil, recognizing the effects of inflation and increased school expectations.
- The 1992 School Finance Act should be revised to provide greater short-term budget flexibility and long-term program stability. Examples include:
  - Voter referendum should not be required for expenditures in the operating budget.
  - A declining enrollment mechanism allowing budget losses to be absorbed over time should be included in the school finance system.
  - Districts should be given more flexibility for carryover and transfer of general operating funds and special funds.

The Local School Board and the New Realities

The National School Boards Association adopted the following statement on the role of local school boards in January, 1992. The Kansas Association of School Boards endorsed this statement five months later. It is intended to provide the framework for school board leadership, education programs and services.

The mission of the public schools is to educate each and every child to the fullest of his or her potential. This mission can be achieved only in the context of the new realities of our society and the world at large. In our times of social, economic, technological, and geopolitical turbulence, the local school board's responsibility is greater than ever. But school boards are determined to meet this daunting obligation and fulfill the mission of public education.

The local school board—an integral part of the American institution of representative governance—acts on behalf of the people of each community across our nation to translate this education mission into reality. A four-fold thrust for leadership by local school boards will ensure excellence and equity in the public schools and is pivotal in keeping America free and first among the nations of the world as we enter the 21st century:

Vision. The board—on behalf of and with extensive participation by the community—envisions the community's education future and then formulates the goals, defines the outcomes and sets the course for its public schools within the larger context of a nation that celebrates its freedoms, its racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, and its commitment to education excellence and equity for all of its children.

Structure. To achieve its vision, the board establishes a structure and creates an environment designed to ensure all students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework. This infrastructure that the board selects reflects local circumstances. It begins by employing a superintendent, adopting missions and goals in harmony with its vision through a strategic planning process, developing and approving policies, formulating budgets, and setting high instructional standards for students and staff. The board acknowledges schools alone can't meet every need and so collaborates with families, community organizations, and other public and private agencies for the benefit of the whole child and of the community in which they live. The board knows that education is not static, so it nurtures a climate conducive to change.

Accountability. Because the board is accountable to the local community, it causes the continuous assessment of all conditions affecting education. Thus, it fosters the highest possible performance by schools and students through such means as monitoring student achievement, placing program corrections into effect as necessary, keeping the public informed of the status of education programs and progress, ensuring that all functions of schools as institutions of teaching and learning fit together harmoniously, providing appropriate staff and board training opportunities, and otherwise fulfilling all governance responsibilities as required by state and federal law. This makes the schools as effective as they can be and keeps the primary focus on student achievement and on how everything in schools can improve that achievement.

Advocacy. The board serves as education's key advocate on behalf of students and their schools in the community in order to advance the community's vision for its schools, pursue its goals, encourage progress, energize systemic change, and deal with children as whole persons in a diversified society.

These four leadership thrusts convey the abiding reality that genuine education reform can occur only with full and enthusiastic support in each local community in the nation. It is only in the schools of each local community that teaching and learning happen. Consequently it is the local school board that can best bring together in our democracy all of the community—parents, community groups, and all others concerned about schooling—in an effective and responsible way to initiate and sustain lasting reform of the schools.

In a larger sense, the ultimate role of the local school board is to help preserve our nation's liberty, prepare our economy for prosperity, and enrich the lives of our people—all through continually striving to foster excellence and equity in public elementary and secondary education for our children. These four leadership thrusts will equip school boards to achieve educations's mission in America.

Local School Boards and KASB Services

The Kansas Association of School Boards exists to assist its members in meeting their constitutional responsibility to maintain, develop and operate the public schools. KASB's programs are developed to help school boards face the "new realities" of society and increasing local, state and national expectations.

KASB's Quest for Quality program presents a vision of school improvement for Kansas based on state outcomes and local decision-making. It includes increased accountability, improved instruction, school readiness and family support, school restructuring and adequate funding.

The Communications Department helps local boards define their vision of education through information. The annual convention and regional meetings feature national and local experts speaking on current issues. The *Kansas School Board Journal* is a quarterly publication focusing on school board issues.

Seminars: Leadership Conferences
Newsletters: *Week in Review*

The Education Services Department assists boards with self-evaluation, goal setting and Boardsmanship through individual inservice programs.

Seminars: Quality Performance Accreditation, Teacher Training and Retraining, Effective Schools and Effective Evaluation
Newsletters: *Clerks' News, Education Services Newsletter*

KASB assists boards in maintaining an appropriate structure of the local school system, beginning with its superintendent search service and cooperative activities with professional school administrator organizations.

The Legal Services Department helps members operate within the bounds of ever expanding state and federal education laws and regulations through phone calls, letter opinions and legal contract analysis. It edits a series of publications on school law, due process, open meetings and other legal developments. It can provide a legal review of district operating procedures.

Seminars: School Law for Principals, Special Education Issues, Employment and School Law
Newsletters: *School Law News*

The Research Department compiles information on school district operations, funding, budgets, personnel management and negotiations. It allows districts to compare their situation with similar districts, with statewide trends, or any other category. It also offers an enrollment projection service.

Seminars: School Finance, School Facilities
Newsletters: *Research Bulletin*

The Policy Service works with boards to revise, upgrade and maintain proper district policies, in light of changing laws and regulations and "best practices" recommendations.

The Labor Relations Department provides a chief negotiator service for boards, can analyze negotiated agreements and teacher proposals, and help districts deal with school improvement issues in the negotiations process. It publishes a negotiations handbook for boards.

Seminars: Chief Negotiators, Basic Negotiations, Preparing for Negotiations, Practicum in Negotiations
Newsletters: *Negotiation News*

Risk Management Services offers insurance coverage in workers' compensation and errors and omissions programs, as well as advice and assistance in controlling insurance costs.

Seminars: School Board Liability
Newsletters: *Risk Management Newsletter*

The Governmental Relations Department tracks legislative issues that can have an impact on schools, provides testimony on behalf of school boards, prepares issue papers and offers a Legislative session "hotline." Legislative positions are determined by KASB's Delegate Assembly. KASB's Governmental Relations Network works with local board members on behalf of education concerns.

Seminars: Governmental Relations, Politics and Education
Newsletters: *Governmental Relations Bulletin*

Glossary

Accountability, educational: A method which rewards districts where students learn more over time and sanctions districts which do not show increasing levels of student learning.

Accreditation process: How schools are evaluated and recognized by the state as having met specific standards.

Assessment: (1) Any type of test given to students to determine how much they have learned. (2) Process of gathering data and putting it into understandable form. It is a way to make judgments or decisions about a program's importance or a school's performance.

Basic skills: Fundamental skills that are the basis of later learning and achievement. These include foundation skills in content areas (can the student read, write and do mathematics?), as well as higher-order thinking skills that apply in all areas of study. QPA will require districts to assure that all students master basic skills.

Curriculum: All the courses of study offered by a school district; a particular course of study within a special field. Examples: 4th grade math, algebra I, introduction to computers.

Disaggregation of data: Separation of information into parts. QPA requires: gender, race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status (free and reduced lunch status).

Dropout rate: The proportion of students, grades 9-12, who leave school for any reason before graduating or completing a program of studies and who do not transfer to another school.

Early childhood education: Any organized developmental and/or educational program staffed by certified professionals for children ages 0-5.

Effective school: A school that demonstrates that all students can learn.

Equity: Freedom from bias or favoritism. All students learn the specified curriculum regardless of factors in their background which may hinder learning.

Global society: The assumption that cultural, ecological, economic, political, and technological ties cross national boundaries and that students must be prepared to compete with individuals and organizations on a world-wide scale.

Higher level skills: Skills needed by a well-educated person in the 21st century; for example, learning to learn, communicating, creative thinking, problem solving, goal setting, teamwork, and the ability to work with an organization.

Indicator: An indicator must:

- be a reliable, valid statistic or piece of information,
- be measured over time,
- have policy implications, and
- be understood by a broad audience.

Input accreditation: The old method of licensing schools which relied on what a school had (courses, books, certified teachers-for example) instead of what students actually learned.

Instructional alignment: What parts of a subject are to be learned and the logical arrangement of these skills into patterns understood by all. Also, the arrangement within each content area and the curricular coordination among two or more content areas.

Instructional leadership: A characteristic of effective schools. In an effective school, the principal acts as an instructional leader by effectively communicating the mission to staff, parents, and students; by staying close to the day-to-day instructional program; by closely monitoring pupil progress; and by providing systematic feedback on progress towards goals throughout the school year.

Integrated curriculum: Unites all curricula through clearly defined outcomes in order to meet the common needs of all learners.

Mastery: The demonstrated ability to use a skill, capacity, or proficiency, at an identified level.

Mission statement: Answers the question "Why do we exist?" States the purpose of the organization; defines the chief function; justifies existence and identifies the clientele (those who are served). It is outcomes-driven and articulates those outcomes; is broad, idealistic and philosophical; is determined through community needs assessment and analysis; is broad enough that it need not change unless the community environment changes.

Monitoring: (1) Systematically checking student progress. In an effective school, student academic progress is measured frequently using a variety of assessment procedures. Results are used to improve individual student performance and to improve the instructional program. (2) A required step in the school improvement process. A State Board initiated audit team will visit each school at least once during each 4-year accreditation cycle in order to validate the degree that goals/targets have been attained.

Multiple assessment: An assessment process which uses more than a single test or evaluation procedure; data are collected from multiple sources, such as formal and informal tests, curriculum-based procedures, observing students, and interviews or reports from parents, students, graduates and the professional staff.

Needs assessment: Self evaluation by each school. The first step required in the school improvement process; first year data is used to establish a baseline; in following years, data is used for future goal setting.

Objectives: Objectives are specific, measurable and reachable targets. They describe how long-term school improvement goals are to be accomplished in smaller steps.

Opt-out: A process which allows parents to excuse a student from part or all of the district's required human sexuality curriculum.

Outcome: Statement of agreed-upon results. The results of an educational program. These usually describe what students will know and be able to do after instruction is complete.

Outcomes based accreditation (OBA): Standards and procedures used to declare a school and/or district has met standards which are based on identified outcomes. Students must demonstrate a certain amount of learning or the State Board may not accredit a school district.

Outcomes based education (OBE): Education which focuses and organizes all of the school's programs and instructional efforts on clearly defined outcomes that all students must demonstrate when they move from grade-to-grade and before they graduate.

Performance based accountability: Measures results of goals established for (1) individual student learners or (2) institutions—schools, districts, states. The major elements of this concept are:(A) establishing goals or targets; (B) applying efforts and processes to reach the goals/targets; (C) measuring progress; and (D) reporting progress/lack of progress to appropriate individuals and/or organizations.

Portfolio: A systematic and organized collection of student work used by teacher(s) and student to monitor growth of a student's knowledge and skills.

Profile: A collection of appropriate information emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of a school, used to measure and report progress toward educational goals. The profile describes baseline data which reflects current information and depicts change over time as the school/district works toward improvement goals. Basic elements include indicators of student outcomes and student behavior, effective instructional practices, school climate, indicators of community and parent information, staff development priorities, attitudes and perceptions (e.g., student and parent satisfaction, employer feedback, community perceptions and parent involvement.)

Race/ethnicity: Asian or Pacific Islander; Black (Not of Hispanic Origin); Hispanic; Native American or Alaskan Native; White (Not of Hispanic Origin).

Sanction: Action taken by the State Board of Education to penalize a school building or district which has not made adequate progress over several years to meet QPA standards.

School improvement: Programs and/or activities organized for the purpose of increasing the achievement levels of all students.

Site councils: Advisory councils required by law to give advice to boards of education by evaluating state, school district, and school site performance goals and objectives and by recommending methods which may be employed at the school site to meet these goals and objectives.

Socioeconomic status: The economic background from which a student comes. Schools typically identify low socioeconomic students as those eligible for free and reduced meal programs.

Standard: Goal statement which defines an acceptable level of academic or behavioral performance by a school.

Strategy: A deliberate plan of action for accomplishing goals and objectives.

Student attendance rate: The number and percent of students present at a school during the time it is in session.

QPA: Questions and Answers

How does QPA differ from the current system?

QPA is an accreditation (licensing) process. Currently, schools are accredited by the State Board of Education based on input, such as the number of staff, appropriate staff certification, meeting regulations, etc. Under QPA, schools will be accredited based on outcomes: how well they are meeting stated objectives for school and student performance. Schools which fail to show progress in meeting those outcomes will face losing accreditation from the state.

What are the QPA Outcomes?

There are ten state outcomes in four areas:

Effective School Principles - Schools must have high standards for student learning, a basic mission to prepare learners, an orderly learning environment, and leadership that results in improved student performance.

High Standards of Academic Performance - Students must master the basic skills, learn to communicate effectively, think creatively and solve problems, work independently and in groups, and develop physical and emotional well-being necessary to be successful adults.

Staff development must lead to student success.

The school and community must collaborate to serve the needs of learners.

Does this mean the state will set each school's curriculum?

No. The outcomes do not require any particular set of courses, means of instruction or even "graduation requirements" other than those currently in State Board regulations. Each school and school district will continue to determine the courses and programs it wishes to offer. However, the curriculum must allow the school to meet the outcomes.

How will the QPA outcomes be measured?

The state will look at such indicators as graduation rates, enrollment in math and science courses, and state-administered examinations. In addition, each school and school district will be expected to develop their own means of measuring progress toward the outcomes. In many cases, results of these measurements will be broken down by race, gender and socioeconomic level to see how well the school is meeting the needs of all students.

Will QPA weaken the importance of "the basics" in academic studies?

No. For the first time, the state is requiring that basic skills be mastered by all students. The introduction to the QPA document notes that "Traditional basic skills, although no longer sufficient by themselves, are still essential elements for success. They should be identified for mastery by local schools and districts, and the results reported at the local level." As part of the school improvement process, the district must make sure that students master the academic skills necessary for later success and the higher-order thinking required of all adults. The first standard of Outcome 1 requires that "Teachers and principals demonstrate that all students have a high level of mastery of basic skills." The QPA process will measure student progress in communications, math, science and social studies through state assessments, as well as "integrated" skills such as problem-solving and creative thinking. Schools can continue to stress "the basics."

How does QPA respond to discipline, drugs and other problems in schools?

Under QPA, schools will be expected to implement effective discipline policies, as well as programs to reduce "at risk" behaviors such as substance abuse and pregnancy. These policies and programs will be developed by local schools and districts. Discipline can be as strong as the community wants, and will help the school meet the other outcomes.

Does QPA mean less local control of schools, and more control by the state?

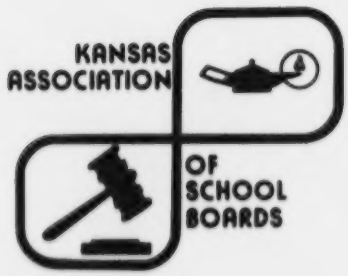
No, under QPA, local school boards continue to determine the academic, vocational, student support and extra-curricular programs of local schools. QPA requires that teachers, parents and community members be involved in these decisions. Schools may develop additional outcomes as they desire. QPA may actually lead to more local control as "input" regulations used under the previous accreditation process are removed.

Is QPA in final form?

No. The QPA process will change over time as newer and better ways are developed to help schools meet the needs of all students. The commitment to school improvement, to inform and involve the public, and to see that schools change to meet the new demands being placed on them will be a constant in the coming years.

What will QPA cost?

This is difficult to answer, but the cost of education, like all government services, is likely to increase in the next few years. Learning how to help all children, instead of just those who are easy to teach, and helping teachers and administrators learn new skills will be an expensive undertaking.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